

# **SUFFOLK COUNTY VANDERBILT MUSEUM**

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum Board of Trustees was held on June 21, 2006, in the Planetarium Lobby, Centerport, New York.

#### **The following were in attendance:**

Dr. Steven Gittelman - President  
Michael B. DeLuise - Treasurer  
David D'Orazio - Secretary  
Maria Figalora - Trustee  
Carl Luecke - Trustee  
Gretchen Oldrin-Mones - Trustee  
Dr. Anthony Pecorale - Trustee  
Dr. William Rogers - Trustee  
Matthew W. Swinson - Trustee  
J. Lance Mallamo - Executive Director  
Russ Skadl - Staff  
Florence Ogg - Staff  
Maryann Zakshevsky - Staff  
Ann Marie Pastore - Stenographer

#### **Absent:**

William Macchione - Trustee

#### **Excused Absences:**

Marjorie Kossoy Fuhrmann - Trustee  
Howard Kleinberg - Trustee  
Susan LeBow - Trustee  
Daniel Olivieri - 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Ronald Parr - Trustee

**(Dr. Steven Gittelman called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.)**

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

This is a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum. Do we have a list of guests in attendance?

**MS. PASTORE:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Does anybody who's visiting us want to speak to us, or do you want to delay that?

**MS. OGG:**

Can we delay my presentation until later on?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, we'll fit you in the agenda as appropriate. Minutes, David.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

After careful review of the minutes, I believe they are precise. I don't think there are any corrections. Does anybody have any notations? I move to have the minutes be accepted.

**MR. DELUISE:**

I'll second that.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: 8/0/0/7 Not Present: Ms. Figalora. Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Kleinberg, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**

Public Relations Report, Todd Shapiro.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Todd wasn't able to be here tonight because he's in Manhattan, but I will say we're going to be featured on a Channel 21 show. It will be a half hour show called "Pick It" on a Wednesday night in July at 7:30. They interviewed a

number of staff members about the dinosaur building and the planetarium. They were here today. They did some other shots around the museum grounds. That should be a great show coming up.

I'll have more to report in the Development Committee Report later on.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, any questions or anything else to add to that report? Buildings and Grounds Committee, Bill Macchione.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I believe Bill is upstate tonight and couldn't be with us, so I will fill in for him. I'm pleased to report that the capital project for the heating and plumbing system in the Education Building and Powerhouse have started. The demolition in this buildings is pretty much complete, and now they're starting the installation of the new furnaces and the handicapped accessible bathroom on the property.

The waterfront project is the final design. The proposal is out to bid right now, and we should be hearing back within the next few weeks on bidders for that.

That's my report for tonight.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, Development Committee, David.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

We have three things to go over. The August 5 date for Casino Night will probably be pushed back maybe to a different venue to give us more time to put together this major event. In lieu of the event being on August 5, we have a suggestion of possibly having a museum showcase evening type of event in the courtyard where we open up the museum for the evening and have a cash bar and music and entertainment, something that we could put together rather quickly and probably make a decent profit out of it without too much input. In the meanwhile, we will continue working on the Casino Night. There has been a suggestion of having that moved to another venue, a bigger venue where we could do this in the cold weather.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Todd has offered to help with that. He is looking to find a – a couple of years ago we had the event at the Garden City Hotel. Todd is looking to find another venue and give us either a complimentary or extremely low priced event.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That event doesn't have to be in October. It could be in November or December.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Absolutely. It could be September through January, right.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Which really gives us ample time to procure sponsorships and the advertising that we need to put this together.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

And, David, you have agreed to chair that.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Yes, if I have ample time, I will be happy to chair that event.

On a different note, I was looking over ways to tie up things that go on here as far as membership fees and whatnot. I was looking over the website. I have to reiterate that there are some changes that really could be made on the website that would probably benefit the institution. The first of which is having some sort of online procurement for funds, something where people could donate to the museum online as far as just putting in their credit card number and also renewing their account online, their annual membership online. I don't know what the logistical ideas are there –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It's doable.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

But I think it's something that's really important. We have been discussing it, but I think we have to make a move on it.

In addition to that, Lance, as far as the membership roster is concerned, I know we were working on that. Do you know where we're at with that?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, we pretty much completed transforming all of our membership from an Excel and a card based program to a Microsoft Access program. That has been done. We have entered all the data right now. Now we're culling through past members who haven't renewed in several years. We're going to have a subsequent list where we can contact them again, even though they're not current members.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

In this program that we have, is there any methodology by which it pops out and spits out people's memberships that have just come up?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, actually we will soon be at the point where we can actually print the letter. We're not at that point yet.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

That's something I think is very important, also.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It will print up the renewal letter and also a welcome to the museum letter.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

I think that's paramount that we get that system in place where as soon as the membership expires, we send out a letter immediately stating that their membership expired.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Right now we renew memberships on a monthly basis. As a membership expires, we renew it. Many museums are now going to a system where you will renew once a year, say, in January. That might be something that we should look at to investigate a little better. January is not a month where we have a tremendous amount of revenue. That might behoove us to do that.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Will the list include corporate members?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, it actually includes past sponsors, etc. Anyone who has bought tickets to events at the museum, they are on our list, they may not be recorded as an

active member, but at least they're in the system.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Will the list be available for the next Development Committee meeting we have next month?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Sure.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

I think it would be a good source of income if we can refine it and get it moving. If you get a whole bunch of small memberships and some of these fellowship type of sponsorships, the smaller ones, if you get a lot of them, you can do pretty well.

In just looking at the membership application, there are some things maybe we want to look at. There are a lot of different types of memberships here. I'm wondering if we couldn't maybe refine this a little bit. I see a dual membership. I'm assuming that's a two-person membership.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

You have individual and you have family memberships. This might confuse a lot of people with all these different types of memberships. You might want to just refine it by having an individual and a family. I really question how many dual memberships we sold last year.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Actually, we just implemented that this year. We didn't have it last year, but we found that for two people, some were just buying the individual and then paying the ticket price. We just thought we would experiment with it. It could use another look at it this year. Maybe we should reevaluate the whole membership and the whole renewal process.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

I think it's something that we should have a meeting about and look over the different sponsorship packages.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We listed our sponsorships on the website, and I have had three companies call me in the past month that have seen it on the website and have expressed interest, but right now we have a proposal pending with a

committee of one company for a partner membership, a \$10,000 member.

**MR. D’ORAZIO:**

The internet now is what it’s all about. Once people see that web address and the advertising, and they pop onto the website, they need to have that online access to give funds. I think it’s paramount right now. That’s really the most important idea of this speech tonight, that we have to get this website – it looks real nice. It looks good, but we have to refine a little bit.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I’d love to get to the point where you could actually buy tickets online.

**MR. D’ORAZIO:**

I don’t know who is working on this or who our web master is or if we could speak to them and work together with them to see if we could get that moving, but --

**MR. MALAMO:**

I will initiate that, certainly.

**MR. D’ORAZIO:**

And that’s it for now.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I want to bring up for consideration the concept of raising our rental fee for site use for next year. We pretty much booked the site for every night that it’s available this year at \$7,500. I would like to consider raising the – we have already booked five weddings for next year.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I think it’s about five.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I would like to consider that. It’s \$7,500 now. I would like to consider raising it to \$9,000.

**MR. LUECKE:**

That includes the site and the tent?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes.

**MR. LUECKE:**

And the site will be the courtyard and the tent?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We're telling them it's going to be moved to the new location, which is down behind the mansion.

**MR. LUECKE:**

How many days or nights are available?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

At this point, only August 5, which is –

**MR. LUECKE:**

That's not what I mean. In a year, if we had nine weddings, how many could we have at the maximum?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Weddings are usually on a weekend day, not always, but usually on a weekend day.

**DR. PECORALE:**

And we only book one a day.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

And we only do one a day.

**DR. PECORALE:**

So if you took the maximum, you're talking roughly about –

**MR. LUECKE:**

Thirty-two and we're doing nine.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

What are you talking about nine?

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**



That's next year already.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We already booked a number of them for next year, 2007.

**MR. LUECKE:**

How many did we do this year?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Every one.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Almost every weekend.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

This has become a big revenue source for us. Buying that tent was a good idea.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

And they're not all weddings. Some are other agencies that are having a non-profit event, such as the Junior League, and the USO is doing an event here in August.

**MR. LUECKE:**

And they're all paying \$7,500?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

If it's a non-profit, it's \$5,000. We give a reduced rate, I think, on the non-profit.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I recommend that you not do that anymore because if we could have given them out as weddings – we can't afford to give up the \$2,500. If we're booking up the place, we should raise the prices.

**MR. LUECKE:**

I agree. I didn't realize that. So we have collected 20 times at \$7,500.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We will. We have deposits for this year. We have had I think three events so far in the last several weeks. We have had the Junior League, two weddings and there was one other event the end of May.

**(Ms. Figalora entered the meeting at 6:25 p.m.)**

**DR. PECORALE:**

Do you also still do picture shoots?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, we do picture shoots.

**DR. PECORALE:**

When they don't do a wedding but they do a picture shoot, what do we charge for that again? I don't remember.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It's anywhere from \$2,500 to \$10,000 depending on what the shoot is. \$10,000 would be a major motion picture. A wedding shoot would be about \$150 plus \$50 for each additional site. The average wedding shoot here is about \$400.

**DR. PECORALE:**

And we do some of those when we have weddings booked, too.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

And we could do several of those a day. It could be a Saturday where we may do up to four wedding pictures.

**DR. PECORALE:**

We're still not letting them do the picture shoots in the house?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We don't do wedding pictures in the house. We have one location in the Memorial Wing staircase. If it rains, they could do it at the bottom of the stairs there. If it's a big event – right now we're talking with Saks Fifth Avenue on a photo shoot for a fashion magazine, and they may want some interior spaces, but that's up in the thousands. That would be a \$5,000 event. That's done, of course, working with the curators, etc.

**MR. LUECKE:**

So we have 20 dates, and if we do nine we would get \$180,000. This year

we're getting \$7,500, so we're getting a little bit less.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, so I'm recommending that other remaining dates that aren't booked or where contracts are not out, that we increase it to \$9,000.

**MR. LUECKE:**

That makes sense.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Would somebody put in a resolution to that effect, please. I'll put in a resolution. It's my resolution.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Further discussion? All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Kleinberg, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**

Thank you. Do we have anything else in Development? Thank you for that report, and thank you, David, for agreeing to take on the event.

Education and Exhibits.

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

You should have some handouts. Florence will be giving her presentation in a few minutes. Somewhere around your folder, you have a whole packet that's paper clipped together that ends with a dinosaur. We have a single piece of paper. The first two items are really important because they are the reason why Florence is here. If you could look those over, it's a description of the books that Florence is going to make a presentation about in order to accession them.

You also have two other pieces of paper from Florence from the AAM. It comes from their recent visit to the annual conference. Staff, by the way, who attended was very grateful to the board for allowing them to attend and to have that opportunity.

In addition, there's a handout from Matt Sclafani about the ongoing horseshoe crab count. Since staff has been meeting with Cornell, and they have been attending our Education and Exhibits Committee meetings, and we've had several of them since the last meeting, there is better communication about upcoming and ongoing events. This is an example of them notifying us. I know Carol makes them aware of all of our site events. You will notice reading the flyer that you can still volunteer and be part of this survey.

There are also several other handouts, which I will mention as I go along in the report. But for right now we have Florence who is going to talk to us about some books.

**MS. OGG:**

I just want to explain a little background because some people have been here for years and we have accessioned about 500 different objects and items. But for people who are new here, in 1950, Parke-Bernet put together an inventory of all the collections that Vanderbilt had left to the County. In 1978 they were assigned numbers; they were accessioned. That's the formal inclusion of these objects into the collection.

Unfortunately, at that time some of the pieces were either in storage or not available so they were never assigned a number. Since we use that basic inventory as our collection bible, so to speak, anything that we find on that list which we later have located, like these books, we want to accession into the collection.

I gave you a list. I will go through the order here of what we're trying to accession. These are a series of ten books from a diarist called Pepys, who was very well known, and who wrote of everyday life of English life in the 1600's. From this book, we can see the bookplate is Belmont, which was Alva's second husband. We can assume either it was given to them after his death or after his mother's death in '33. There were ten of these.

The second book is a book called, "Noted Men and Women." It describes a little story about Charles Dickens, Victoria Woodhull was very friendly with Cornelius, and several other notable people. In this book we find Vanderbilt's bookplate and an inscription by the author. It's a very personalized book, and we want to include this as well.

The third collection is a Jack Sheppard book. I didn't bring it because it was very fragile. I just didn't want to handle it, but that was also listed in the

original list. We would like to include that.

Also this is Parsons Marine Turbine. This engine was used in Vanderbilt's yacht, *Tarantula*. There is a picture of it here. He had that yacht in 1904. If you have been in the mansion in the ship model room, you will see a model of it and pictures of it. This is important to the history of the yachts. We want to include that.

Last but not least, which I really think is wonderful, it's a textbook that belonged to Willie from Harvard, which he attended for a year. In our archives we have a little note saying he was honorably dismissed. He left. He is also listed in the alumni, though he never graduated. So this is one of his textbooks, "Elementary Meteorology." You can see his bookplate, and he inscribed it himself in 1901, which would have been the date he would have graduated.

Also, this is really a find because we have very little personal memorabilia or any documents, and here he kind of wrote little notes to himself. This is the collection that I would really like to have accessioned. We will number it and put it back in the library. He had about 1,100 literary properties that are in the library, so these will be included. I'm asking for permission to accession these. Any questions?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

By tradition the way we handle this is that Florence will bring in an item, she'll show it to the board, and then the next meeting we vote on accessioning. That's the way we have handled it in the past. This is the presentation to the board. At the next board meeting, we will vote it in. Accessioning is one of the most serious commitments that the museum makes. We are essentially saying that we are taking these items in for perpetual care. Because of that, it makes sense to have them presented and then have a resolution brought before us in the following meeting. For the past decade, that's the way we have handled it.

**DR. PECORALE:**

That was true when we were having meetings every month, but now we're not going to accession these for two months.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

There is no harm in it. They have been sitting in the library for 50 years.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I just had one question for Florence. You said that he was very friendly with this other person.

**MS. OGG:**

With the author?

**DR. PECORALE:**

Right.

**MS. OGG:**

Well, you can read the inscription.

**DR. PECORALE:**

What's it say?

**MS. OGG:**

"To William K. Vanderbilt. The best wishes and the best from -- " I don't have my glasses with me. It's from the author.

**MR. SWINSON:**

"With thanks and the best wishes of the author." J. Morrissey.

**MS. OGG:**

Yes, and a lot of the figures that are described are somehow connected to the Vanderbilt. Like Victoria Woodhull was a confidante, an advisor to Cornelius and also a spiritualist. He did invest in different stocks, according to Victoria. That's another interesting story. People like that were connected with the Vanderbilt within this book.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Thank you.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

If there are no other questions –

**MS. OGG:**

So at the next meeting I don't have to bring these.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No. Thank you.

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

Okay, I'd like to start the report by passing along a compliment to staff. As you know, last Thursday Cornell Cooperative had their boathouse open house to display and explain the various programs. Steve, who gave a great speech, Marjorie and I attended. After the exciting tour, speeches and presentations, a woman sought me out to tell me how much she appreciated the summer educational programs that her son, who is now 25, has enjoyed so much at the Vanderbilt over the years. She praised the variety, the content, and the quality of our educational programs, not only as an appreciative mother but also as a teacher who brought her gifted and talented classes to these varied and fulfilling programs.

I assured her that we continue to offer quality programs, the titles of which can be found on our new and improved website. She was delighted to hear that we're adding even more programs to our diverse offering and that we're working more closely with Cornell to develop and promote education opportunities.

If our conversation had continued, I would have told her about our most recent program addition. For instance, in the planetarium Dave has developed two new programs: "Larry Cat in Space" and "Native Moon Show." Stephanie developed "Curating and Collecting," a program that facilitates existing merit badge requirements as set forth by the scouts. You have a copy of her lesson plan in your packet. Lorraine and Eric continue to work on developing the weather and the nature trail programs.

Florence has implemented thematic house tours, which are extremely popular. The summer's tour theme is "See Shells." If you check your handouts, you will see what Florence and Stephanie have included in this tour that thematically highlights the collections. Work has begun on creating the script for the next theme, which is coat of arms, family crest and symbols of knights and griffins in our collections.

I would also tell her that we now offer seasonal funfests which have been a great success and have attracted all ages to the museum. We're looking



forward to the fall funfest and the possibility of offering joint programs with Cornell. Already Matt Sclafani is looking into getting us several hundred pumpkins for the festival, which will be held in October. I would mention that our brochures soon will be available in several languages.

We'd like everyone, not only this supportive woman, to know about the exciting things happening here at the Vanderbilt. We have been fortunate to be featured in some local newspapers, such as the *Northport Times*. In fact, we've been featured in many of the *Times-Beacon-Record* papers and also in *Newsday*. In your handouts you have copies of the two-part article on depression glass by Elise Pearlman, an announcement about the Springfest, an article, "It's never too late to fall in love at the Vanderbilt," and a *Newsday* feature that refers to our dinosaur exhibit. We're mentioned in the spring issue of the *Cross Sounder*, which is being passed around. I will pass around a copy of *Museums*, in which we are not mentioned but perhaps we would like to consider placing a future ad.

We have also benefited by interviews and specials on local TV stations. A "Living History" segment aired May 31 on Channel 12 News. Florence has ordered a copy of the tape, and Dave has posted photos of the cast presenting the tour on our website. On June 6 Channel 21 interviewed Lorraine, Lance, Stephanie and Dave about the museum and its role in the community. During the interview, Stephanie was able to tell more about the dinosaur exhibit than has ever been said before. She emphasized how scientific our exhibit is and went in-depth on how we teach young children using the Vanderbilt collection. She explained how the dinosaurs continue Mr. Vanderbilt's mission to bring education to the children of Long Island. In the planetarium Dave and Lorraine described how educational and entertaining our programs are. This is a tape that's going to air in July. I think that Lance made mention of it before.

We continue to disseminate museum information by attending outreach programs such as the National Museum Day on May 18. We plan to have booths at major festivals, such as the Huntington Fair. The booth would display museum attractions and upcoming events. Membership info, flyers, laser and planetarium tickets will also be available. We would like to thank Bill Macchione for his offer to loan a display backdrop for this booth. Of course, we continue to loan materials and exhibits to people like Margaret Finne who recently borrowed some marine science specimens to use at the William Floyd Library.



In other news, letters have gone out to the local garden clubs inviting their members to join us in October for a planning meeting in preparation for decorating the mansion and grounds for the holidays. Several clubs have already responded and planned to help us out again this year.

Howard Kroplick has offered to loan us his model of the 1904 race course, racers, and spectators.

Florence has received the supplies and archival boxes that were much needed.

Lance spoke at the Babylon Business and Professional Women's meeting on the Vanderbilt women, and it was very well received.

We would like to thank Bill Rogers and myself for funding the sub-woofers for the planetarium speakers.

All in all, after some repairs to the dinosaur building and the planetarium I think we're about ready for the summer. Camps are set to begin the week of the 26<sup>th</sup>. We have worked out an acceptable allocation of summer classroom space with Cornell Cooperative Extension. They'll be using the valet and the laundry rooms as their primary classrooms in the mansion, and our staff will remain in the guest cottage. We envision great cooperation during the camp seasons.

Finally, I would like to pass around something that was too big to Xerox. It's from four-year-olds at the Huntington Jewish Center. They wanted to thank Lorraine for their planetarium experience. Reading their reactions -- from Sophia who loved the stars and going round and round, to Emily who liked the rain, to Lindsay who liked Oscar the sun singing -- you can see what an enjoyable learning experience this was.

That's the end of our report.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Thank you for that report. Any comments or questions?

**MR. SWINSON:**

Steve, how can I subscribe to the museum and other literature?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I imagine subscription information is in that.

**MR. SWINSON:**

I'm looking for an insert or something.

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

Just you personally subscribing?

**MR. SWINSON:**

Yes. I guess we can do it toward the end of the meeting. Maybe they have something online.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I understand that Gretchen has to leave early. Before she does, I want to take out of order an item, if I could. You will find in your packets a photocopy of Chapter 184, which is Suffolk County Code for the Vanderbilt Museum. You will note that Chapter 184 is for the Vanderbilt Museum of Suffolk County. It makes wonderful reading, and I urge all of you to read it in your spare time.

One of the responsibilities of the Board of Directors, and we are the Board of Directors of the Museum, the Trustees, is to appoint a Director. If you will notice, please, on Section 184-5, which will be three pages in, if you go down to Section D, which is on the next page and should be four pages in, you will notice in heavy script the following clause: "In order to maintain museum operations, if the position of Executive Director becomes vacant, the Board of Trustees may request of Suffolk County that the appointed Suffolk County Historian assume the administrative duties and responsibilities of the museum on an interim basis provided that the qualifications referenced in Section 184-59(b) above are met. The museum shall reimburse Suffolk County all salary, retirement, and employee benefit costs during the period associated with this interim appointment utilizing earned revenues of the museum until such time as an Executive Director is selected."

I'm asking that the Board pass a motion requesting the Suffolk County Legislature to pass this particular codicil into law under the museum section.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Is it necessary for us to ask for an executive session to ask specific questions relative to people who can be identified by the questions?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No, I think we can discuss it in open session.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Then I need to ask you the question.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Go ahead.

**DR. PECORALE:**

The current Executive Director is Lance Mallamo. Do you have knowledge that the position of the Executive Director is going to become vacant within a short period of time?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I have the following knowledge that, number one, his contract expires within 30 days. Number two, we have not yet renewed his contract. We have not yet entered into negotiations. Number three, he is also the Suffolk County Historian.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Essentially then, we are going to pay Suffolk County whatever his salary is for the period of time after the next 30 days.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Only if we – we are asking them to put this into law. Once it's in law we can then determine if we wish to make the request. All we're doing here is creating an option for the museum to tide the museum over during any period when we are unable to find a suitable Executive Director and we view that there is a suitable County Historian who could act as Executive Director. We want the ability to do so in the future. But by no means is this binding us to do so.

**MR. LUECKE:**

What made you think of this?

**DR. PECORALE:**

My question is, what is it that you're not telling us?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

There is nothing that I'm not telling you. I'm answering questions. What I'm basically saying to you is this. At this point, if we don't renew his contract or we can't come to an understanding with him, but we could hire him through the County, then we may be able to make an arrangement with the County so that as an employee of the County, he is able to be eligible for certain benefits.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I'd like to request an executive session.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Do I have a second?

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Kleinberg, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**  
What's your reason for an executive session? I should have asked before the vote.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Personnel matter.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay, we will go into executive session.

**(Executive Session 6:50 – 6:55 p.m.)**

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We're back in session. That was brief.

**DR. PECORALE:**

So you want a motion to –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Request the County –

**DR. PECORALE:**

That this be added into the policy Chapter 184 of the Vanderbilt Museum.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Correct.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Are you making the motion, or do you want it from the floor?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I'll be glad to make the motion or you can, if you so wish.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I'll move it.

**MR. DELUISE:**

I'll second it.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed: Abstentions? **(Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Kleinberg, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**  
It carries unanimously. Thank you very much.

Finance Committee.

**MR. DELUISE:**

We had a Finance Committee meeting on June 14. We had three topics. The first topic was to talk about the Cornell Extension contract. We had some questions and some minor changes that we suggested to Lance. Lance brought it back, and I think we're still waiting for them to get back to us. It was just some minor changes. Lance, we should be able to present that at the next board meeting.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I believe so.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Do you want to go over those changes?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I don't have the changes with me, Carl. Maybe you could call me, and I could go over what we did. We may have addressed it –

**MR. DELUISE:**

We may have addressed a lot of it, but if you have any questions, just address –

**MR. LUECKE:**

Did you address the insurance on it?

**MR. DELUISE:**

Yes, I think we did.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We were going to have that renewed by the County Insurance and Risk Department.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Let me ask you a question about it, though. What program are they doing, Cornell Extension?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

They operate a marine science research center in the boathouse. They have many different programs.

**MR. LUECKE:**

But it's education for children.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

That's part of their program. They also do monitoring of Long Island Sound waters.

**MR. LUECKE:**

We do background tests of our people who are involved with children. Is that something that we would want them to do also?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I believe that they do that in the course of business, but I will check into that. It's a good point.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Do they do fingerprinting?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I'll have to check on that. I can't answer that, Tony, but I will check.

**DR. PECORALE:**

The only reason why I ask is because now all teachers must be fingerprinted – all people who work in the education environment.

**MR. LUECKE:**

My thoughts are so minor, if I give them to you now we won't need the phone call, if that's okay.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Sure.

**MR. LUECKE:**

One question is, the insurers are going to add the County of Suffolk as additional insured.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**MR. LUECKE:**

They should also add the Vanderbilt Museum as additional insured.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Okay.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Two is, if you have two different organizations working in the same property and an employee is injured, their only recourse against their employee is comp, but there is nothing in the world to stop them from bringing suit against the second, which would be the Vanderbilt and their employees. There should be a hold harmless in terms of an injured Cornell employee. If you're running this by the Suffolk County Risk Manager, I would think they would know that.

Thirdly, the coverage they're giving us does not include anything that would be a non-bodily injured property damage like molesting a child, etc. and you

may want to ask them for other coverage.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Okay.

**MR. LUECKE:**

I'd be more than happy to talk to you about it. I just thought that since these are so minor, I could tell you now.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Thank you. I have a request. I am very strongly of the opinion that I want a cost benefit analysis. I want to know how much we are receiving financially from them, how much it costs us to provide them with utilities, services, and whatever we might give them. I want projections under the new contract as to what the revenue stream will look like.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Steve, the suggestion was that utilities and all those things we will be covering our actual cost. Am I right, Lance?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I understand that, okay, but in essence we have been subsidizing them for five years. Although I have very positive feelings toward them, very positive feelings toward their organization, I'd like to know financially where the new situation – what will the revenue stream be like? Believe me, not everything is covered by revenue stream. I think that we have to at least know what we're agreeing to. If it turns out that it's a negative revenue stream, then I feel that we might want to make it at least neutral.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Right.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

One of the things is that there is a potential for competition between programming. I'm asking for a stab at – are we losing or are we gaining on the programming side? I want to cover that so that we go into this contract knowing where we stand, and we can knowingly go into anything. But to not know and go into it is different.



**MR. LUECKE:**

Is their audience the exact same as ours?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I want to define what their audience has been and what their audience will be. There are a lot of things that they can do that we can't. I want to get a handle on where they're intending to go, not to limit them but to get a sense. It's more than a contract.

**MR. LUECKE:**

I have one more thing to add. The building that they're in, if they accidentally burned it down, they don't show property covered. They only show liability. Liability policies usually exclude any property in your care custody control. So we should make sure that that's amended in case something happens to the building, and they can pay us for it.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Pay the County for it or repair it.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I have one question, and I don't know whether it's been revised because you said there were revisions. Was there any discussion about revision of the section as to who can renew the contract?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

There has been discussion about that, but it hasn't been changed yet.

**MR. DELUISE:**

I think a lot of the questions you're bringing up have been covered on that. I think you will see it's looking at it in a different way. Right? Gretchen was with us.

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

Yes.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Where we're actually looking and saying, if they do break something or hurt

the building, then they will be responsible for it. There are a lot of things in there that were addressed, simply. I don't think they have a problem with that.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Tony is speaking specifically over the right to renew the contract being transferred to the Board of Trustees and taken away from the Executive Director.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, I think we did that.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Yes, I think we did that. Again, you're still talking to them about going back and forth, right, but I think you'll be pretty pleased with the difference in it with the simple changes, but I think it's in the right direction.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

In essence, the relationship between the two bodies has been Director to Director. It has not been Board to Board. I believe that there should be a shift in that, and that there should be at least communication between Board to Board. They are a Board that creates visions just like we do, so I have started to meet with their Director and with their Chairwoman just to get a sense of where they're intending to go with things.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Do they have a local Board, or is it the Board –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

They have a local Board. I'm speaking of the Long Island branch. Okay, if there are no other questions on that, we'll go to the operating budget.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Also in your packet, you will see a copy of a proposed operating budget for 2007. We think it's conservative. Do you have any questions on that? Have you had a chance to look it over?

**MR. LUECKE:**

You emailed this to us, but for some reason I only got the first page.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Because my instructions weren't appropriate. I should have said, print sheet one, sheet two, and sheet three. I thought it would automatically print, but when I went to print it, that's how I had to do it. You had to open each one up. This is the complete document. I can answer any questions associated with it.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Now this has to go to the County?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, it does. Actually, it has gone to the County. I've told them that it hasn't been adopted by the Board. It was reviewed yesterday by the County Executive's Office. I met with them yesterday afternoon and went over it. They seem very pleased we were trying to address our deficit in a head-on fashion and working to eliminate it. Clearly, I think they understood what our issues were, in that they revolve around utility costs. We have tried to reign in our expenses. We have tried to retrench and reorganize where we could. You see the difference in fuel just for the actual in 2005. It was almost \$72,000. When we prepared the 2006 budget in early 2005 based on the numbers from 2004, we estimated the fuel cost to be about \$26,000. So they have tripled in a two year period.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Did we get the check that we were supposed to get, that \$60,000 check from —

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We received part of it. Do you mean from Key Span?

**MR. LUECKE:**

We have received part of it and the other part is being worked on? How much of it —

**MR. MALLAMO:**

That's about forty.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Oh, good.

**DR. PECORALE:**

They were going to give us a credit, I take it.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Actually now what has been proposed is we're not going to get a credit. They have given us a cash payment, and they're going to make funds available through their grant program for us.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We accept cash.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Are there any other questions?

**MR. LUECKE:**

It's hard to look at this in just a couple of minutes.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I'll go over quickly the highlights with you. If we go into the expenses, the estimated 2006, normally in my budget I usually use the adopted 2006 budget. I didn't in this case because right off the bat our permanent salaries are estimated \$586,700. Our adopted budget for this year, our salary level was \$738,000, so we have a \$150,000 reduction. That incorporated the layoffs that we did earlier this year.

I have asked to increase that for next year to add a few positions that I think we're really desperate to have and hopefully to earmark a cost of living and some merit increases for staff. We have reduced the temporary salary line significantly because that money has now been transferred to the professional services category. That involves our contracting out the security department. We have held the line pretty much on supplies and materials. There is no big change there.

Again, our fee for service in the 456 account for professional services, that's where the security shows up once again. Our insurance premium we estimate at about eighty. Now remember last year we renegotiated the insurance, so that's really down. We were paying almost ninety-five in insurance. We've really been seeing some significant savings there. In fact, our insurance this year did not go up. We kept the premium at exactly what it was last year, so that really helped.

Our retirement contribution has gone down about eleven thousand because we contracted out the security force. That was a significant savings in the pension plan. This is really kind of a cost-to-continue budget. We're working to chip away at the deficit that we find ourselves in.

**MR. LUECKE:**

The retirement medical health coverage, has the County ever –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We're going to have an executive session on that tonight as well.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Do you want a motion to adopt this?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, we would need a motion.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I think it should come from the Chairman of Finance.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Motion.

**MS. OLDRIN-MONES:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed? **(Vote: 9/0/0/6 Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Kleinberg, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**

**MR. DELUISE:**

The third topic at our Finance Committee was our financial statement. We're going to ask Lance to address that. I understand that they're together now.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, our 2004 statement is together, but it's time to begin the 2005. My question was, do we want to continue with the firm that we had last year? I think we worked most of the kinks out. Or would you prefer that we generate new bids and we look for a new firm.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Steve, you worked with them the most.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

In the end, we kind of got where we had to go. The trouble was that they changed their mind where we were supposed to go many times along the road. They're not really experts on government accounting. I think they were out of their element and that's why there were so many shifts. That's why it was so difficult. I feel that they had to do a lot of learning while they were doing it. I'm uncomfortable with the fact that I would not call them expert in the area of accounting that we are. I think we ended up where we had to be, but I think it was a tough road. It would not have been a tough road if they had originally given us a GASBE statement. Originally they gave us a FASBE statement. So I went in to discuss a FASBE statement, and we debated all the points of FASBE, ruffled everybody's feathers, and then went down that road for quite a while. It was frustrating. Then all of a sudden they came back and it almost seemed like they woke up and said, "Well, you're not really FASBE; you're GASBE." It was like, we're not playing baseball; we're playing soccer. No wonder I couldn't figure out the rules. I don't know if anybody disagrees with me, but that's kind of what happened. The fact that they didn't know that we were GASBE right from the start implies to me that they just didn't know enough about GASBE in the first place, and they admitted it. They said they had no clients that were GASBE, right?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

If you want to be their only client, go right ahead.

**DR. ROGERS:**

But don't you think that now that we've gone through this exercise with them, that giving them contracts for the next year might be very beneficial. They know how you have to work it now.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I feel quite the opposite. I feel that everything they know, they know because we forced them to learn it. That means that they only know what they were self-taught during this exercise. I could never turn to them and say that I would be responsible if I accepted an answer they gave me without going to somebody who is an expert. I would not be able to accept their answers and

say that I agree.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Are there any experts?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, by all means.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

They're probably going to be more expensive than this company.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That is a decision that you make after you bid it out.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Where are we in terms of various audits? Are they all completed or on the way to completion, and we don't need to have a new audit until what day?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Well, are you talking about the pension issue?

**MR. LUECKE:**

No, I'm talking about financials. In other words, how much time do we have to look for another auditor?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I think that's my concern. We should really have this under way right now. Last year it took us about two months to get the bids.

**MR. LUECKE:**

When will the auditors start on whatever the next project is?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We should have already started. We really should have started back in April for 2005.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Lance and Steve, I don't see any reason to change course now if we're under pressure again this year to give them another year.



**MR. DELUISE:**

That was the feeling of the Finance Committee to try them another year.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Just because they're the smaller guy doesn't necessarily mean they won't come around and maybe do their homework. We got what we wanted this year. Is that correct?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No, we ended up – we got our papers in. You see, I cannot say that we got what we wanted. We got what we ended up with.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Well, what does that mean? Is what we ended up with what we wanted?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No, by no means. I mean, we started out with a certain set of objectives based upon what they gave us as an initial statement. We pursued those objectives only to find out that as soon as we argued them into a corner, they all of a sudden decided that we were in the wrong ballgame in the first place. They then said it was because of their own ignorance. Whether this is late or not, I still think you – I'm certainly putting it on the record, and I'm not being shy about it.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Essentially then, if we were to say that we're going out looking for an auditor, they might still present a proposal. We would not be excluding them from presenting a proposal.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No.

**DR. PECORALE:**

So the question that you're raising in my mind is, should we now send out a request for proposal?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I absolutely think we should.

**DR. PECORALE:**



I don't see anything wrong with that because sometimes it's a good idea to even take your current account and have them think that they might be replaced.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Tony, I have to disagree on this issue. This is one issue that I stand firm on. We would not vote on another accounting firm for at least two more months. We're already behind the eight ball on these financials for this year. We're going to end up in the same situation that we were last year and the year before.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That's not true. Last year we had a problem because we had difficulty obtaining records from the prior firm. This year we will not have a problem obtaining records from the prior firm.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Let's assume we pick somebody for the next board meeting, which will be in two months. We'll be into August. They have to start working in August to have it in by the end of the year for 2005.

**DR. ROGERS:**

I would like to feel that they have acquired some knowledge on the learning curve. They have already been through that part of it. I certainly think that they should be given – we should have the opportunity to see what they're going to do this year before we jump and make any changes. We could go from the frying pan into the fire. We don't know.

**MR. LUECKE:**

The problem is that if they don't have the professional knowledge necessary for what we needed before, who knows what we'll need in the future. Without that knowledge, they could be awfully –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We could have a train wreck.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

All things considered, we know what 2005 gave us. There is nothing really new there that they're going to have to deal with that's substantially changed.

**MS. FIGALORA:**

How did we come to this accounting firm anyway?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It was a proposal bid out.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I don't see anything wrong with asking for proposals from accounting firms, more than just the one that we had last year. Yes, it's going to take us two months before we can make that decision, but –

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

That's basically just putting more work on the Executive Director. It's telling him he's got to go out and solicit proposals, put out an RFP –

**DR. PECORALE:**

But we have an RFP that we did last year, right? Wouldn't it be essentially the same?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, but I would have to update it.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I'll make the motion that the Executive Director consider accepting proposals for the audits for the 2005 fiscal year.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Do I have a second?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Further discussion?

**DR. PECORALE:**

By no means am I implying that we wouldn't give it to the same firm. I want us to make sure that that's on the record. All I'm saying is that we're requesting proposals.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Lance, do you have any thoughts in this?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Well, I think the big issue from last year was, are we FASBE or GASBE? I think that decision has been made. I think that was a big learning curve for everyone, but I have no preference one way or the other.

**MR. DELUISE:**

And you find no problem with waiting two months to start?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Not if that's your decision.

**DR. ROGERS:**

I know the problems that we had. I know the problems that Steve had. I know that you had to practically go in there and tell them what to do, but we've been through that already. If you get another accounting firm that hasn't had us as a client, doesn't know what the problems may have been or can be, you're going to go through the whole thing again. I would like to see how they perform, at least the second year or at least if you're going to think about changing and you're not happy, start thinking about changing it, not for this year but for next year.

**MR. LUECKE:**

That's a good point. The question, though, is GASBE or FASBE the only difference that they would have to know? Were there other issues?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That was not their issue. Their issue was not only limited to whether we should be FASBE or GASBE. They don't know anything about GASBE. That's why they didn't know whether we should be GASBE, simply because it was completely unfamiliar territory. So now that we have determined, yes, we are GASBE and we should be on safe ground in staying as GASBE, we have taken along with us an accounting firm that just admitted boldly that they had no experience with GASBE.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

At what point did they admit this?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

They admitted that to me repeatedly.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I think we had a board meeting.

**DR. PECORALE:**

They said it at the meeting.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

This is not a personal thing.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

I just don't remember them saying that they didn't know anything about GASBE.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

The only thing, if I could just add one thing. I'm going to throw this out there for what it's worth, but one of the other problems we had with the firm was -- there is a huge part of a learning curve with auditors now. In light of the scandals that they've had, they want written documentation on every facet of the operation. That was a tremendous amount of work last year. Things that I didn't think we'd have to get, like the deed to the property -- every day it was something. There is a tremendous load on the business office to provide the financial documents. Right now, we don't have a business manager. We have a part-time clerk doing the financials. I had a hell of a time just to get the financial report ready for the meeting tonight. That's going to be a challenge. If we do change, it will be a big challenge to reeducate a new firm to do that this year. That would be my only concern.

**DR. ROGERS:**

I think they have gotten part of their education.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I would say to you if we were to have an RFP, one of the things that we should have in that RFP is that the firm proposing has significant experience in working with GASBE. They cannot say yes to that requirement, and that they have demonstrated experience in working with GASBE. They have already admitted that they have no experience working with GASBE.

**DR. ROGERS:**

But they have now.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I would certainly not want to base the tumultuous couple of months that they had with us trying to figure out who we were and where we belong and having them go to outside counsel, which is how they eventually put our papers together, and then say that we consider that expertise in GASBE. I consider that they managed to get us through. We had the wrong accountants from the starting place. If the board wants to stick with them or the board wants to put out an RFP, that's fine. I've said my piece, but I think that if there is a problem with our paperwork in the future, we have only ourselves to look to.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

But this has happened already. This is nothing new to us.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Please call the vote.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Do you want me to call the vote?

**DR. PECORALE:**

Yes, call the vote.

**MR. SWINSON:**

I just have a quick comment to make. Is there anyway for us to go about looking for an accounting firm that has had a record and history of dealing with museums and working with GASBE, which is what we are; correct?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I think it might be hard to find one with museums. It might be easier to find one with GASBE experience, GASBE being government accounting.

**DR. PECORALE:**

School districts for example. Let's be sure everyone understands what we're voting on. If you vote in the affirmative, you're voting to put out an RFP and still consider the firm that we had last year. If you vote in the negative, you want to just stay with the firm that we had last year.

**MS. FIGALORA:**

Is there a problem with just putting it out? It's not to say that we're going to change firms.

**MR. DELUISE:**

That's what he's saying.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

It's going to be two months before we can even look at those RFP's. It's going to be dumped on the desk in front of us at a board meeting, and we're going to be asked to vote on it. We'll know nothing about these firms. We at least have some history with this firm. They have finished our financials. My feeling is, there is no reason for us to change firms. I'm adamant about that.

**MS. FIGALORA:**

We don't have to change firms. We're just putting out there –

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

I understand that but we only have a board meeting every two months.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We can change that.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

We have a skeleton staff working. If we go to another firm, if that does happen and we delay this, Lance and his staff are going to have to – not to mention the fact he may be in turmoil at the time between jobs or whatever – he's going to have to get whatever staff he has to put together all these financials to get them to another firm, and they will be asking questions, many of them. There will be a lot of meetings, even though he has all of this information, but there is still going to be a lot of information that has to be procured.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Not only that, but the current firm may feel somewhat uncomfortable.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We don't know that the current firm is willing to take the engagement in the first place. Do you know that they are willing to take the engagement?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

They expressed an interest.

**DR. PECORALE:**

And I think that that also is a point in our favor. They have been through it. I think that in their proposal, we may find that they are willing to make an investment in time and energy to be able to handle our GASBE audit. I don't see anything wrong with asking –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Let them demonstrate that they have GASBE expertise that they didn't have when we took them on last year.

**MS. FIGALORA:**

But you know they don't have it, except for what they have learned this past year.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Why don't we talk to them? Why don't we find out?

**DR. PECORALE:**

That's a good point. If you talk to them, you're still talking to them months before you can vote on this.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

They finished the financials. They signed them. They're responsible for them.

**DR. ROGERS:**

I think you're making a mistake if you prolong the decision on who to hire. I think it's important that the decision to hire an accounting firm should be done now. They should be given an opportunity – if you go to them now and say, look we can't handle it, we don't like it, there is no question about it. You immediately know you're going to go out for another firm.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Let's take that. Essentially then you're saying, vote tonight on extending the firm that we had last year. I get the feeling from Steve that he's not comfortable with that. Frankly, after the meetings that we had last year with that young lady and that gentleman, I don't feel that I am that comfortable with them either. I don't see any reason why we can't seek proposals. I'm not prepared to vote tonight to extend the contract with that firm another year.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**



Let me bring out another point. Most of you only saw their polished presentations, when they came to the Board and were on their “good behavior” and presented to you what they had to say. Then I looked like a bully because I was trying to pin them down on things. You did not see the work sessions, which were impossible. Their lack of knowledge was exploding all over the place.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Steve, I agree with you. I know what you went through. I was privy to part of it, but I feel that if you get another firm whether they know GASBE or FASBE, if they don't have the expertise in handling something like this, you're going to have the same problem. These people have been through it, good, bad or indifferent. They may not want it, but certainly at this point, somebody should say to them, “Do you want the account? Can you handle it? Do you understand what has to be done? Can we continue for another year?” Maybe they're going to say that they lost money on it, and they don't want it, but I think that they should be given the opportunity without feeling that somebody is going to step in two months from now.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Look, the question was asked, did anybody have a problem with the current firm. I'm the guy who worked with the current firm most of the time. I'm telling you that in my opinion, hiring them for another year is an outright mistake.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Then a decision should be made to hire another firm, period, but we're not doing that here now.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm just going to have to lay it on the line. I am telling you that I worked with them. They don't know the laws. They didn't know the depreciation schedules or where we fit. They didn't know how to categorize us. They didn't have the expertise. In the middle of conversations, they couldn't answer questions and had to seek outside expertise. They are going to get us in trouble. I think it's a mistake to use them for another year. If the gloves have to come off, that's what I say. But if you want to use them, you're the Board.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I have one other comment. Based upon the membership of the Board tonight that's here, if we're not unanimous to either hire the firm or to go out for a proposal, we don't have sufficient votes to pass either motion.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

We can. All we need is a majority of the eight that are present.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I thought you needed a quorum –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

A majority of a quorum.

**DR. PECORALE:**

A quorum is eight, and a majority of the membership would mean that you need eight affirmative votes.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No, we would need five.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I don't know whether we have five, but I think the interpretation is not the interpretation that I have from our meetings with legal counsel from the County.

**DR. ROGERS:**

I respect your feelings about this, and I respect the fact that you would like to see another accounting firm. I have no objection in voting for another accounting firm. I do have an objection of being wishy-washy about it. I think that saying to give them an opportunity or look for somebody else – if the decision is to look for somebody else, then look for somebody else, period.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I believe asking for proposals means that you can still go with the other firm. I would like to see their proposal. Maybe they went out and hired somebody that's got a lot of background in GASBE.

**MR. LUECKE:**

That could be.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I would be willing to listen to that, but I want to make an educated decision. I don't want to go ahead and just say, yes, you're the accountant.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I think we talked about this enough. I again say it, I ask for a vote.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

He's calling for the vote. All in favor of calling the vote?

**DR. PECORALE:**

I just want to make sure everyone understands what we're voting for. All we're voting for is to ask for proposals. We're not saying who we're interested in employing to do the audit.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

There is no discussion when someone calls the vote.

**DR. ROGERS:**

Can you just add one thing to that? That we approach them immediately for our proposal without waiting for other proposals to come in.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Let's leave that up to Lance. I don't have a problem with that. In fact, I think that's a good idea.

**MS. FIGALORA:**

How would you ensure that these other firms have GASBE knowledge?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I think the first thing I would ask them is, can you please disclose to us the accounts that you have that fall under the GASBE rules? If they have no current accounts that fall under the GASBE rules, then they would not be qualified. I would entertain listening to accounts they have handled in the past that had GASBE rules, but I would much prefer that they had two or three accounts, four or five accounts that currently fall under GASBE, and I want to talk to their people. I would like to speak –

**MS. FIGALORA:**

Did we know we were GASBE when we hired them?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No, we thought – we knew we were GASBE. We felt we were under the FASBE rules as an exception to GASBE. They gave us a FASBE statement not realizing – because they don't do GASBE – that that codicil in the law had expired. They simply didn't know because they weren't exposed to it.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

When we did the RFP, we asked for museum experience, which they had, but it was non-profit, not government.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

That's right. In other words, they did not mislead us when they answered the proposal, not to my knowledge. It's just that when it came down to categorizing us, they found themselves in unfamiliar territory. They are not qualified to be our accountants as GASBE accountants based on the information that we have.

**MS. FIGALORA:**

How much trouble can we get into the next year if we keep them and then solicit other proposals for the following year?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I don't know. I don't want to find out.

**MR. LUECKE:**

The question has been called.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I apologize. There are rules of order that I'm supposed to stick to, and I'm breaking them myself. The question has been called. All in favor of taking a vote now? **(Vote: 5/1/2/7 Opposed: Mr. D'Orazio. Abstentions: Ms. Figalora & Dr. Rogers. Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Kleinberg, Mr. Parr, Ms. Oldrin-Mones & Mr. Macchione.)**

Now we're voting on the motion that we seek proposals. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: 4/2/2/7 In Favor: Mr. Swinson, Dr. Pecorale, Mr. Luecke & Dr. Gittelman. Opposed: Mr. D'Orazio & Mr. DeLuise. Abstentions: Ms. Figalora & Dr. Rogers. Absent: Mr.**

**Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Kleinberg, Mr. Parr, Ms. Oldrin-Mones & Mr. Macchione.) It carries.**

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Is that a majority?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

It has to be more in favor than against. Okay, we will seek proposals.

**MR. LUECKE:**

I just have a question. The question is, at a prior meeting I thought we took in during the vacation \$50,000 a week and two weeks for \$100,000.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

No. We took in \$50,000 in one week, and we took in \$50,000 in two weeks. The spring break this year was spread over a two-week period, not a one-week period.

**MR. LUECKE:**

So we took in \$50,000 for two weeks, and that is under admissions.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

This was in April. We're talking about the month of April. So if you look, the admissions in April and February are very similar, but the break week in April was a two-week period. In February it was a one-week period. Some schools had off one week; some schools had off the other week. We met the same target. The only negative in it was that our expenses were up because we had a staff for both weeks.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Our revenue for each month so far compared to what we budgeted is not where we hoped to be?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Remember also in the first three months we were closed in the mansion for construction. We were open for the break weeks but we were not open for tours on weekdays during those periods. That hampered us a little bit, that construction. The construction has stopped.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Is May just a projection? It's not the actual?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, that's correct.

**DR. PECORALE:**

Can you give us any idea at all what May looks like?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I know we've been very busy. We have been really going at full steam in May and June.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I thought we were going to project where we stand in terms of the pluses and minuses. As I see it, looking up through April, we are down \$28,000.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

You're right, but I do think we'll be making that up in May and June. Those are kind of our biggest months here.

**DR. PECORALE:**

That's fine. It's just that I thought we were going to sort of try to put that in so that we knew roughly where we were.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

As I said, Tony, we were very fortunate to get this finished by tonight because our new clerk really is getting her sea legs on our system.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I thought Michael –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Michael is doing it, but he needs the data from the clerk to do it.

**MR. DELUISE:**

That ends my report.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Director's Report.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

As I said, it's been a very busy spring at the museum with the Spring Funfest. It was a very successful activity, and we want to emulate that during other seasons of the year now and in the future.

We also had some major repairs done on the tent by rebuilding the tent flooring and trying to level it out better than it has been in the past. We have been purchasing new carpet for that, so the tent looks really good right now.

We have also done some new landscaping around it. Our gardens are in good shape with the Master Gardener Program. We have developed a number of new volunteers working with the gardens. They're expanding out, taking responsibility for new areas that haven't been landscaped properly in the past.

We had a major event last Friday night, "Broadway Under the Stars." It's a new series of events we're trying to do in the tent of having a musician, champagne and desserts. It was very successful, and people really enjoyed it. We'll have that same program back at the museum in December for a holiday show and on Valentine's Day of 2007.

I apologize for the warm air here in the planetarium. The air conditioner has died, and we have to replace the chiller, the compressor out in the back. This is going to cost us about \$10,000. Unfortunately, that's going to have to come out of our operating budget, which we did not plan on a budget expense for that, so we will have to make some adjustments in other areas, but we have to have that air conditioning restored. Right now we have no air movement at all, and it's very uncomfortable.

There is a new provision in the State Education Law requiring museums to establish an Audit Committee that will review the audit for the institution for the year. That committee can be comprised of Board Members but not including the Treasurer or the President. We did need to establish such a committee, if not tonight, then at some point in the near future.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I think we should develop a policy about that. I did it, and I thought I gave it to you.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Yes, you did give it to me.

**DR. PECORALE:**



I didn't bring copies for everyone, but I really think that's what we should do, rather than just do it because that committee should not have certain rights. One of them is choosing who is going to do the audit. That's got to stay with the Board.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Do you have it with you?

**DR. PECORALE:**

No, I didn't bring it with me. I didn't know it was going to come up tonight, but I think we can fax it to everyone.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It's not necessary we take action on that tonight. We can address that at the next meeting.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I really think we should have a policy on it.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We do need some action on a state grant to replace the telescope here in the observatory, but I need a resolution appointing someone, either myself or the Board President or someone on the Board to execute the contract documents for that state grant.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I imagine –

**MR. MALLAMO:**

It's a \$15,000 project.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I move that the Executive Director be authorized to take whatever steps necessary to secure the grant.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Discussion? All in favor? Opposed? **(Vote: 8/0/0/7 Not Present: Ms. Oldrin-Mones. Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr.**

**Klein, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Thank you.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

I'm going to ask for an executive session on personnel issues.

**MR. DELUISE:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed? **(Vote: 8/0/0/7 Not Present: Ms. Oldrin-Mones. Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Klein, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**

**(Executive Session 7:50 – 8:30 p.m.)**

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Due to the lateness of the hour, I'm going to skip my President's Report. Old business? New business?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

I just have to note for the record the absences tonight that are excused are Dan Olivieri, whose father is ill, Ron Parr, who is ill, Howard Kleinberg has a sinus infection and Marjorie Fuhrmann has a back problem.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Susan LeBow has a neck problem also.

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Susan didn't notify me.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

She notified me.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I have a piece of old business. I just want to ask if you were able to get all of the things that you wanted translated into the language that you wanted?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

We're waiting for German.

**DR. PECORALE:**

And you're covered with the money and everything?

**MR. MALLAMO:**

Yes, they have all been done. When the translator gets back from Germany, we'll have the German one finished.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Carl.

**MR. LUECKE:**

We agreed that a letter would be written to the Suffolk County Attorney that will confirm that as long as Suffolk County and Risk Management agree, the Vanderbilt employees may purchase at their own expense health insurance if that employee meets Suffolk County health retirement requirements.

**DR. PECORALE:**

I just want to add, "at the employees' expense. " I wanted to ask you if you accept this, that the Board of Trustees authorizes that a letter be sent, and then the rest of what you said.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Okay.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Are you talking about this letter being sent or a letter being sent by Suffolk County to our employees?

**DR. PECORALE:**

No –

**MR. DELUISE:**

That a letter to be sent to the Suffolk County Attorney.

**MR. LUECKE:**

Which is what he said, right?

**DR. PECORALE:**

No, he didn't say that the Board authorizes that a letter be sent. He said –

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Let's just amend it so that the Board authorizes that a letter be sent.

**DR. PECORALE:**

That was the intent, wasn't it?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Yes.

**MR. DELUISE:**

I'll second that.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

Discussion?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Is it possible to read back what I said?

**MS. PASTORE:**

Do you want me to find it on the tape?

**MR. LUECKE:**

Should we do that?

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

No, when we send out the letter, it will reflect our intent. Any further discussion? All in favor? Opposed? **(Vote: 8/0/0/7 Not Present: Ms. Oldrin-Mones. Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Klein, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**

Any other business? Can I have a motion to adjourn?

**MR. DELUISE:**

Motion.

**MR. D'ORAZIO:**

Second.

**DR. GITTELMAN:**

All in favor? Opposed? **(Vote: 8/0/0/7 Not Present: Ms. Oldrin-Mones. Absent: Mr. Olivieri, Ms. LeBow, Ms. Fuhrmann, Mr. Klein, Mr. Parr & Mr. Macchione.)**

**(Dr. Gittelman adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.)**

**SG/ap**